

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USLO PEKING

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 017433

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, CH

SUBJECT: GOVERNORS VISIT TO PRC

REF: STATE 6892

1. ON JANUARY 24, CHI CH'AO-CHU AND HSU HSIN-HSI OF PRCLO CALLED ON SOLOMON OF NSC TO PRESENT MFA REACTION TO PROPOSED PRESS RELEASE REGARDING GOVERNORS TRIP TO THE PRC.

2. CHI SAID HE WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO REPORT THAT THE TONE OF THE DRAFT TEXT IMPLIED MORE OF AN OFFICIAL QUALITY TO THE EXCHANGE THAN IS APPROPRIATE GIVEN THE PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE NATURE OF OUR EXCHANGES. HE FURTHER SAID THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO MAKE THE RELEASE PUBLIC AT THIS TIME SINCE THE TIMING AND COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION WERE UNCERTAIN.

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3. SOLOMON RESPONDED THAT WE WOULD OF COURSE OBLIGE PEKING BY NOT MAKING ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS, BUT HE OBSERVED THAT IF IT APPEARED THE TRIP WOULD BE POSTPONED BY ANY MEASURABLE DEGREE HE COULD NOT GUARANTEE THAT SOME OF

THOSE WHO WERE TO HAVE PARTICIPATED WOULD NOT START TALKING (COMPLAININGLY) ABOUT THE DELAY. (BECAUSE OF CHINESE ATTITUDE ABOUT THIS VISIT, WE ARE NOT MOVING FORWARD WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE OTHER SEMI-OFFICIAL EXCHANGE AGREED TO IN NOVEMBER.)

4. COMMENT: PURPOSE OF PRESENTING CHINESE WITH DRAFT PRESS RELEASE WAS, OF COURSE, TO FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION ON THIS PARTICULAR DELEGATION AND TO GET SOME REACTION FROM THEM ON PROPOSED DATES AND SIZE OF DELEGATION. CHI INDICATED THAT THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH REGARDING THESE POINTS AT A LATER TIME. HIS PRINCIPAL MESSAGE AT THIS STAGE WAS TO SAY THAT WE SHOULD NOT GO PUBLIC.

5. CHI'S EMPHASIS ON THE "PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE" NATURE OF THIS PARTICULAR EXCHANGE STRIKES US AS PECULIAR INASMUCH AS THE WORDING WAS VERY SIMILAR TO PRESS RELEASES CONCERNING EARLIER CONGRESSIONAL VISITORS. HIS REFERENCE TO UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION IS RELATED TO A COMMENT SOLOMON MADE AT THE TIME OF PRESENTING THE DRAFT RELEASE THAT IF THE VISIT WERE DELAYED BY A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD OF TIME THE GOVERNORS CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE NEW OFFICERS AND THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING THOSE TO VISIT THE PRC MIGHT HAVE TO BEGIN ALL OVER AGAIN.

6. THIS IS BUT THE LATEST SIGN THAT PEKING MAY NOT BE PREPARED AT THIS TIME TO FIRM UP ARRANGEMENTS ON EXCHANGES AGREED IN PRINCIPLE LAST NOVEMBER. (A CSC REQUEST FOR FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT ITS PROGRAMS REMAINS UNANSWERED, AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE HAS ALSO BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN ELICITING DETAILED PROPOSALS FROM PEKING.) WE ARE PUZZLED AND CONCERNED BY THIS AND WOULD APPRECIATE USLO'S VIEWS ON POSSIBLE REASONS FOR CHINESE RETICENCE.

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